

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Mt. Pleasant School

other names/site number Mt. Olive Methodist Church

2. Location

street & number Abiding Way not for publication N/A

city or town Gerrardstown vicinity

state West Virginia code WV county Berkeley code 019 zip code 25420

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, Division of Culture and History
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain): _____	_____	_____

Mt. Pleasant School Berkeley County, WV
Name of Property County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property Category of Property Number of Resources within Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing	
	public-local		district	1		buildings
	public-State		site			sites
	public-Federal		structure			structures
			object			objects
				1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

none

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

Current Functions

EDUCATION/school

RELIGIOUS/church

RELIGIOUS/church

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Materials

NO STYLE

foundation STONE/limestone

OTHER: gable-front

walls STONE/limestone

roof METAL

other WOOD

Narrative Description

Refer to Continuation Sheets

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

Refer to Continuation Sheets

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Refer to Continuation Sheets

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

- ARCHITECTURE
- EDUCATION
- ETHNIC HERITAGE/AFRICAN-AMERICAN

Period of Significance

c. 1897-1939

Significant Dates

c. 1897

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre**UTM References**

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	747726	4360877	3		
2				4		

Verbal Boundary Description Refer to Continuation Sheets**Boundary Justification** Refer to Continuation Sheets

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David L. Taylor, Principalorganization Taylor & Taylor Associates, Inc. date April, 2008street & number 9 Walnut Street telephone 814-849-4900city or town Brookville state PA zip code 15825

Property Owner

name Board of Trustees, Mt Olive Churchstreet & number 6922 Winchester Avenue telephone _____city or town Inwood state WV zip code 25428

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Mt. Pleasant School
Berkeley County, WV

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7. Description

Mt. Pleasant School (Photos 1-7) is located in the Gerrardstown District of rural Berkeley County, West Virginia, less than one mile south of the unincorporated village of Gerrardstown, in West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle. The school is in the southwestern quadrant of the county, approximately three miles north of the Virginia state line. It lies near the eastern foot of North Mountain and northeast of Dutton's Gap, at the end of Abiding Way (County Road 51/3, renamed as part of the county's 911 street-naming program). The building is little altered and retains integrity is all of its composite qualities.

The nominated tract contains a single building:

1. **Mt. Pleasant School**, education-related

Description: Mt. Pleasant School is a single-story gable-end-oriented vernacular¹ building approximately 24' wide and 39' deep, finished in native random ashlar limestone and capped with a gable roof clad in corrugated metal sheeting (Photos 1-4). Oversized stone quoins are at the corners (Photos 1-3), a design feature seen on stone architecture throughout the Eastern Panhandle. The school is oriented to the east and is built into the slope of the hillside, with a raised front porch which rests on a replacement foundation of smooth-dressed concrete block (Photo 1). The date of installation of the newer foundation is not known. The porch is accessed by a straight-run stair of concrete with wrought iron railings, and is capped with a shallow-pitched hipped roof of metal with exposed rather tails. The porch roof is supported by plain wood posts and the porch itself is enclosed within a wrought iron railing. Above the porch roof, in the pediment of the gable-end-oriented facade, is a fixed-light sash opening into the unfinished attic area.

The facade is one bay in width, with a centered entrance featuring a single door with a 3-light transom sash. Side elevations are three bays in width, with flat-topped double-hung six-over-six sash. Exterior shutter hinges are retained on the windows although no shutters are extant (Photo 4). The rear (west) elevation has no openings (Photo 2). The building is sparse in its detailing and lacks any notable physical embellishment.

The interior of Mt. Pleasant School (Photos 5-7) is as modest as the outside and consists of a single room which was formerly the school classroom and now serves as the sanctuary for the congregation which only occasionally uses the building for worship services. School desks, if they ever existed, have been removed and have been replaced six rows of modest pine pews, flanking a center aisle (Photos 5-6). An altar rail of wood with turned balustrades extends across a portion of the room, behind which is a pulpit facing from front to rear (Photo 5). Flooring is of random-width pine, the walls are of plaster and the ceiling is of beaded wood.

Date: c. 1897

___1 contributing building

¹As it is used here, the term, "vernacular," corresponds to that term as it is defined in Ward Bucher's **Dictionary of Building Preservation**, "a building built without being designed by an architect or someone with similar formal training; often based on traditional or regional forms."

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Mt. Pleasant School sits on a small tract of land at the foot of North Mountain, in a rural setting. A wood privy of indeterminate age stands northwest of the schoolhouse; it is considered to be an uncounted landscape feature with respect to the nomination. Beyond that, only an above-ground fuel oil tank, directly behind the building, is associated with the nominated resource.

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8. Significance

Mt. Pleasant School meets National Register Criterion A for its association with the patterns of *education* and *ethnic heritage* in rural Berkeley County, West Virginia, and also Criterion C for *architecture*, as a locally-distinctive example of a one-room schoolhouse built for the education of African-American children.

In 1730, the Governing Council of the Colony of Virginia issued orders for this section of the colony to be settled. Originally part of Spottsylvania County, a new county, Orange, was formed in 1734, followed by Frederick County in 1738. Berkeley County was formed from portions of Frederick County in 1772. Adam Stephen (1718-1791) was the county sheriff and commanded a division during the American Revolution. In 1773 he laid out Berkeley County's new county seat of government along Warm Springs Road, the overland route between Alexandria, Virginia and the town of Bath, now Berkeley Springs. Stephen christened his new town Martinsburg, after his friend Thomas Bryan Martin, a nephew of Lord Fairfax. Midway into the nineteenth century the railroad came to Martinsburg and Berkeley County's fortunes paralleled those of both the Cumberland Valley Railroad and the Baltimore and Ohio. Martinsburg became a thriving railroad town, bolstered by the development of the orchard industry which continues to the present. Diverse other industries developed in the community as well, schools and churches were built, and new neighborhoods developed outward from Adam Stephen's original eighteenth-century settlement.

From Berkeley County's earliest days, education—principally for privileged White males—was a priority for the more affluent segments of the population. As early as 1800, a property conveyance made reference to a boundary line as being beside a schoolhouse, near the present-day Veterans' Administration Center at Martinsburg. The county's wealthier families could afford private tutors or could send their youngsters to one of the area's private schools, but the less fortunate had few educational options, and African-Americans had practically none in pre-Emancipation Virginia. A succession of legislation by the House of delegates, begun in 1810 and completed in 1818, established the Literary Fund. A survey of Berkeley County in 1818 revealed nineteen schools in use and fourteen unoccupied; by 1821 six school districts, each with its own Board of Education, had been created in the county.² The Literary Fund remained the source of educational financing until the enactment of Virginia's free schools legislation in 1846.

Following the Civil War and in the wake of Reconstruction, Berkeley County—by then West Virginia—reorganized its school system, and the planning of the various Boards of Education for the first time provided, at least minimally, for African-Americans. By the time of publication of *A Catalogue of Public Schools in Berkeley County, W. Va.* in 1889, the Garrardstown District listed thirteen White schools and one—the Garrardstown Colored [sic] School—for African-Americans. Within a decade another school for African Americans was apparently needed in the Garrardstown District, since, when the schoolhouse was built, originally as a church, it doubled as a school for the area's African-American youth.

²Don. C. Wood, *Documented History of Martinsburg and Berkeley County* (Martinsburg: Berkeley County Historical Society, 2004), p. 231-233.

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Schoolhouses, typically of the “one-room” variety, dotted Berkeley County. They were constructed of brick, wood, and stone, with wood predominating, and varied widely in size and detail. Like Mt. Pleasant School, they were typically gable-roofed and gable-end oriented, with a door and sometimes windows on the facade. Each side elevation was penetrated by a series of windows allowing an abundance of natural light into the classroom. In pre-Integration Berkeley County, the schools were racially segregated.

Berkeley County’s one-room schools operated well into the twentieth century; the last to close being the Fairview Opequon School which operated until 1960.³ The 1916 U. S. Geological Survey 15-minute quadrangle map for the area near Mt. Pleasant School indicates the presence of several schools in the Garrardstown area. These include McCubin, New Hope, Sulphur Spring, Union Corner, and Ridge Schools. The site of Mt. Pleasant School is marked on that map only with a flag (Fig. 1). This graphic indicates the presence of a school, but unlike the other schools shown on the map, Mt. Pleasant School is unnamed, either an oversight by the cartographers or an intentional omission because it was a school for African-Americans.

The first school consolidation was authorized in West Virginia in 1908 and involved the abandonment of six small schools in Marshall County and their consolidation into a three-room building.⁴ By 1916 nearly three hundred rural schools had been abandoned, and while consolidation originally required the written request of seventy-five percent of the voters in the affected districts, state legislation passed in 1915 permitted school boards to undertake consolidation on their own initiative, an often unpopular process which took decades to complete.

The area of present-day Garrardstown was settled as early as the late 1740s by Baptists who came to make their home but fled during the French and Indian War. They returned after the conflict and erect the first Baptist house of worship west of the Blue Ridge.⁵ The village itself was laid out in 1784 by David Garrard and bears his name. This southwestern quadrant of Berkeley County has remained rural and agrarian in character, still home to many of the orchards for which Berkeley County is known.

In 1870, Ebenezer Coe conveyed a one-half-acre tract to Joseph Gano, Benjamin Busey, and Archibald Myers, who were serving as the Board of Education of the Township of Garrardstown. The conveyance stipulated that the tract was conveyed for “educational purposes.”⁶ The ownership was to run with their successors in office. An earlier school may have been built on that site after the initial conveyance; this is not known. An article in a publication of the Berkeley County Historical Society provides some additional meager history about the schoolhouse/church.⁷ The article notes, “Mt. Pleasant School was built about 1897.

³*Ibid.*, p. 234.

⁴Charles Henry Ambler, **A History of Education in West Virginia from Early Colonial Times to 1949.** (Huntingdon, West Virginia: Standard Printing and Publishing Co., 1951), p. 436.

⁵Wood, **Op. Cit.**, p. 148.

⁶Berkeley County Deed Book 89, Page 237, Berkeley County Court House, Martinsburg, West Virginia.

⁷*Berkeley Journal*. Vol 15. (Martinsburg: Berkeley County Historical Society, 1991), p. 46.

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Mr. James Johnson has an old receipt dated 1896, that he found among his father's (Lewis Johnson's) papers, which stated that Aaron T. Johnson was paid 50 cents for hauling stone for the new school, soon to be built. Aaron T. Johnson was Lewis' father. The people of Mount Pleasant built the school themselves." The article also states that the last day of school at Mt. Pleasant was May 26, 1939. This time span establishes the Period of Significance for the property.

A handwritten, unsigned manuscript in the collection of the Berkeley County Historical Society at Martinsburg, adds some information to the history of the property. The manuscript reads

We have tried to record the history of our beloved church from her origin to the present time. This church was organized in 1870. At that time there were eight families living there. The settlers called it Mt. Pleasant. [The first families included] Henry Johnson, Frank Briscoe, Basil Richardson, Harrison Robinson, David Peterson, James Grey, Joseph Johnson, and Aaron Johnson. It was built by the Board of Education [as] a school for colored [*sic*] children. Not having a place to worship, the men gave their labor free so they could use it on Sundays for a place to worship. The masonry work [was] laid by John Emery, Frank McFelin, and Andrew Bowers. . . The Board of Education gave it to people to be used as a church in 1942.⁸

Mt. Pleasant School meets National Register Criterion Consideration A for religious properties in that, while originally served as a church *and* schoolhouse, its religious use is only sporadic and its significance lies in its one-room-schoolhouse design and its association with the education of African-Americans in pre-Integration Berkeley County.

⁸"Mt. Olive Church, Garrardstown, West Virginia, Inwood Circuit, Circuit, unpublished MS in the collection of the Berkeley County Historical Society, Martinsburg, West Virginia.

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9. Bibliography

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SOURCES

Public Documents

Public records, Berkeley County Court House, Martinsburg, West Virginia.

Unpublished Manuscripts

Wood, Don C. "Mount Olive Black Methodist Church." unpublished manuscript, Berkeley County Historical Society, Martinsburg, West Virginia.

Unsigned manuscript, "Mt. Olive Church, Garrardstown, Wv, Inwood Circuit." Berkeley County Historical Society, Martinsburg, West Virginia.

Books

Ambler, Charles Henry. **A History of Education in West Virginia from Early Colonial Times to 1949.** Huntington, West Virginia: Standard Printing and Publishing Co., 1951.

Wood, Don. C. **Documented History of Berkeley County, West Virginia.** Berkeley County Historical Society, 2004.

Maps

U. S. Geological Survey Map, Garrardstown Quadrangle, 1916. 1:15000 scale. Washington: U. S. Geological Survey, 1916.

Periodicals

Berkeley Journal. Vol. 15. Martinsburg: Berkeley County Historical Society, 1991.

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10. Geographical Data**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Being that parcel described in Berkeley County Deed Book 89, Page 237, containing approximately one-half acre.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries reflect only that parcel occupied by the nominated property, providing a setting for the building and a buffer of \pm 50 feet around the building on all sides.

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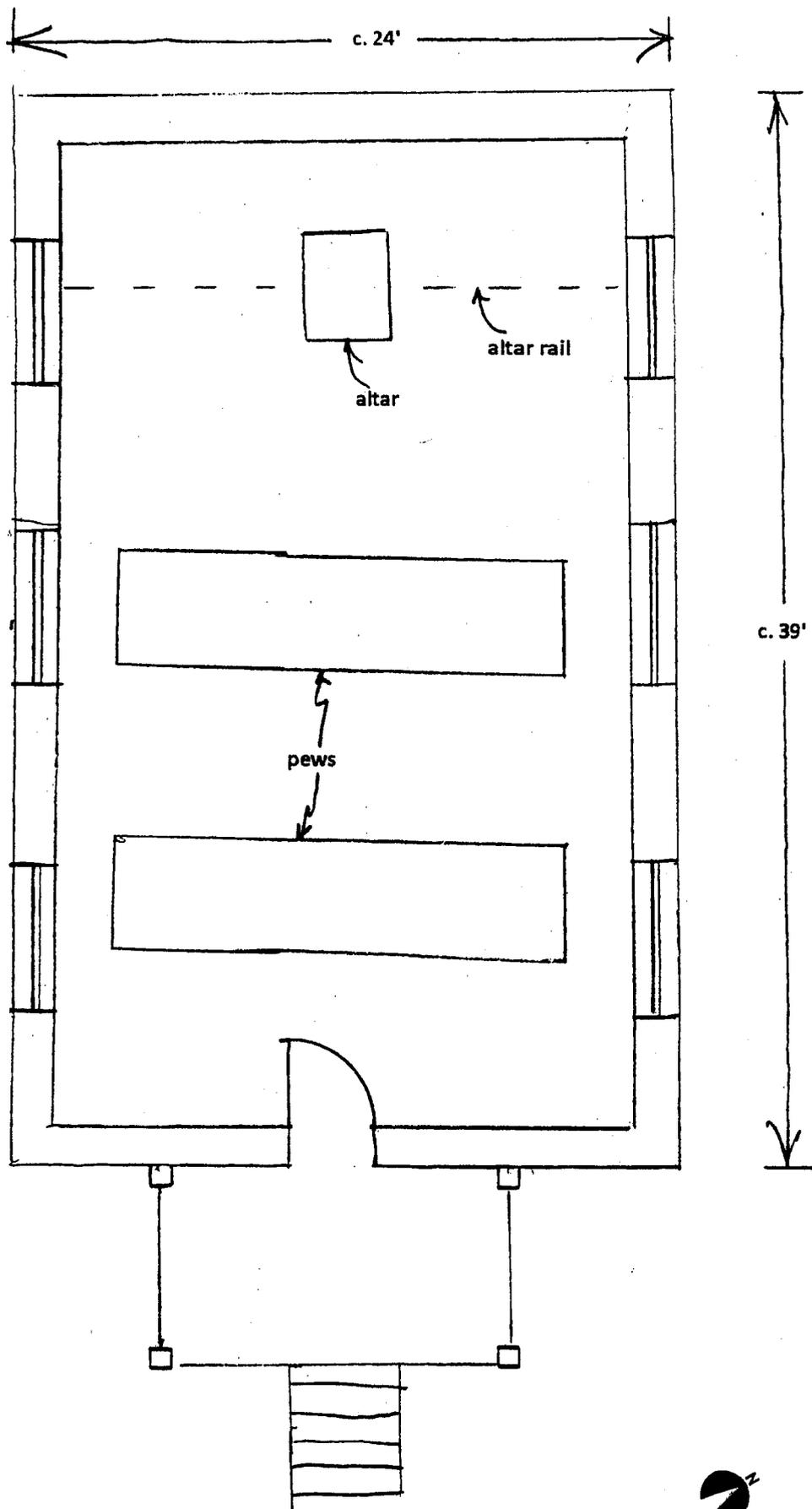
Section Number Photography Log Page 7

Photography Log

All Photographs:

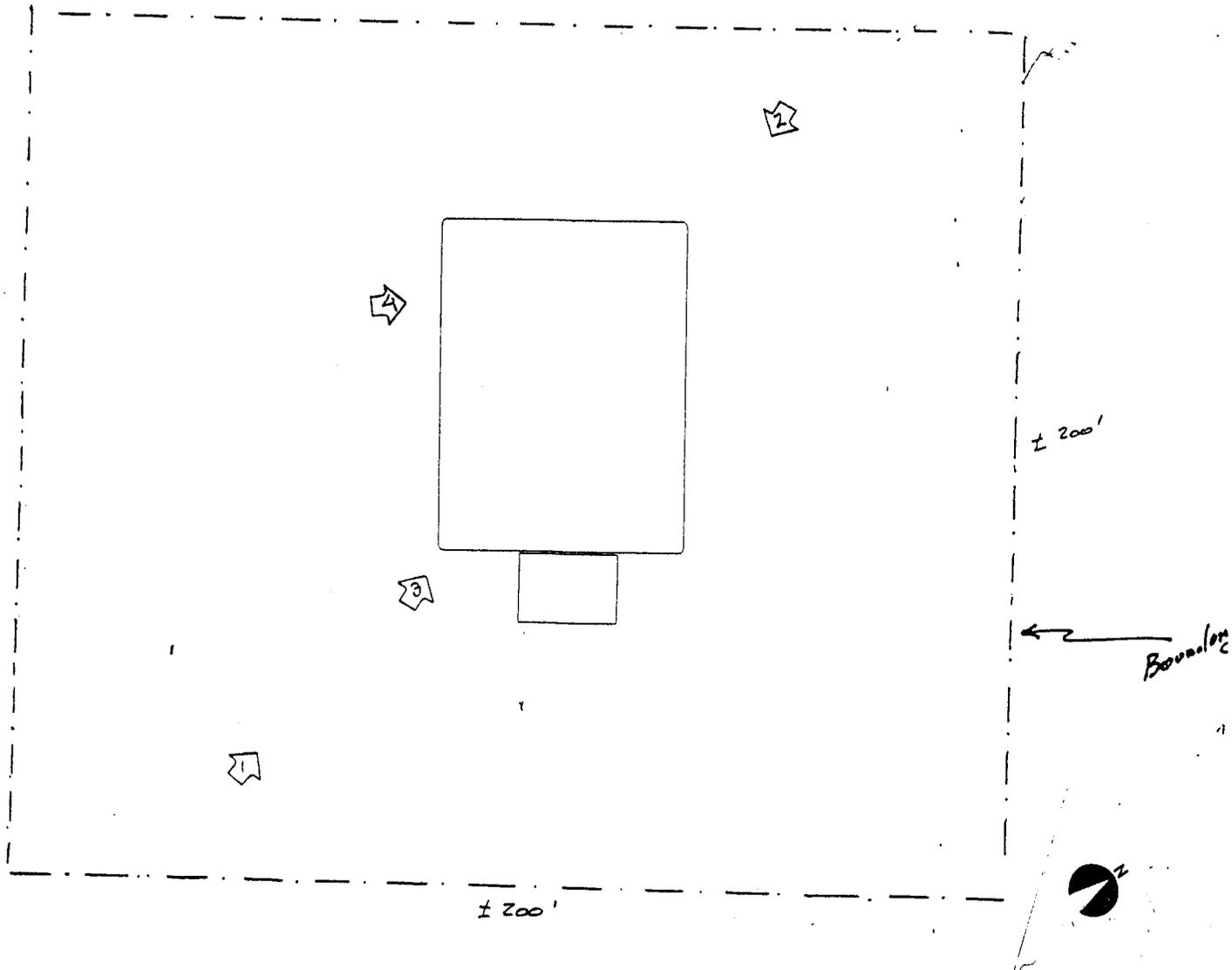
Mt. Pleasant School
Berkeley County, WV
David L. Taylor, 2008
Taylor & Taylor Associates, Inc., Brookville, PA

1. Southeast perspective looking northwest and showing facade, front porch with replacement concrete block foundation, scale and massing of the building, side elevations, fenestration, character of site, etc.
2. Northwest perspective, looking southeast and showing rear (west)elevation, fuel oil storage tank, etc.
3. Exterior surfaces, detail at southeast corner, showing oversized quoins, looking northwest.
4. South elevation, detail, looking northwest and showing fenestration, 6/6 character, exterior shutter hinges, etc.
5. Interior, view from back to front, looking west and showing pews, center aisle, altar rail, and altar.
6. Interior, detail, showing character of pews, looking northeast
7. Interior, detail, showing typical window and lack of trim.



Floor Plan

MT. PLEASANT SCHOOL
Berkeley County, West Virginia



Site Plan with Photo Views
Mt. Pleasant School
Berkeley County, West Virginia



